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6 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
7 WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON
AT SEATTLE

8 LETICIA LUCERO,

9 Plaintiff,

10 v.

11 CENLAR, FSB, *et al.*,

12 Defendants.
13
14

No. C13-0602RSL

AMENDED ORDER GRANTING IN
PART CERTAIN DEFENDANTS'
MOTION TO DISMISS

15 This matter comes before the Court on the “Motion of Defendants Cenlar, FSB,
16 Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., Jennifer Dobron, and Nancy K. Morris to
17 Dismiss Plaintiff’s Second Amended Complaint.” Dkt. # 82. Plaintiff alleges that the moving
18 defendants violated the Washington Deed of Trust Act (“DTA”), the Real Estate Settlement
19 Procedure Act (“RESPA”), the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act (“FDCPA”), and the
20 Washington Consumer Protection Act (“CPA”). In addition, plaintiff alleges that defendants
21 Dobron and Morris engaged in fraud and that defendant Cenlar violated the Truth in Lending
22 Act (“TILA”), breached its implied duty of good faith and fair dealing, and committed the tort
23 of outrage. The moving defendants seek dismissal of all of plaintiff’s claims.

24 Where, as here, a motion under Fed. R. Civ. P. 12(c) is used to raise the defense of
25 failure to state a claim, the Court’s review is the same as it would have been had the motion
26 been filed under Fed. R. Civ. P. 12(b)(6). McGlinchy v. Shell Chem. Co., 845 F.2d 802, 810

1 (9th Cir. 1988). Although the complaint need not provide detailed factual allegations, it must
2 offer “more than labels and conclusions” and contain more than a “formulaic recitation of the
3 elements of a cause of action.” Bell Atl. Corp. v. Twombly, 550 U.S. 544, 555 (2007). The
4 Court will assume the truth of the plaintiff’s allegations and draw all reasonable inferences in
5 the plaintiff’s favor. Usher v. City of Los Angeles, 828 F.2d 556, 561 (9th Cir. 1987). If the
6 allegations give rise to something more than mere speculation that plaintiff has a right to relief,
7 the claim may proceed. Twombly, 550 U.S. at 555.

8 Despite the narrow focus of a motion to dismiss, the parties barely mention the
9 allegations contained in the Second Amended Complaint (“SAC”). Defendants apparently
10 prefer to make arguments without reference to the actual allegations, while plaintiff throws up
11 facts that are untethered to any particular legal claim and may or may not be asserted in the
12 SAC. In addition, defendants regularly argue that a claim should be dismissed because
13 plaintiff has failed to “prove” it. The question for the Court is whether the facts alleged in the
14 SAC sufficiently state a “plausible” ground for relief. Twombly, 550 U.S. at 570. It is with
15 that question in mind that the Court has reviewed the SAC and the memoranda, declaration,
16 and exhibits submitted by the parties.

17 **BACKGROUND**

18 In August 2006, plaintiff and her then-husband borrowed \$391,000 from Taylor,
19 Bean & Whitaker. In addition to a promissory note, plaintiff signed a Deed of Trust
20 identifying Taylor, Bean & Whitaker as the lender, Old Republic Title, Ltd., as the trustee, and
21 Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. (“MERS”), as the lender’s nominee to hold
22 beneficiary status. Dkt. # 34-1 at 123. Plaintiff fell behind on the payments in 2010, and a
23 Notice of Default was issued by defendant Northwest Trustee Services, Inc. (“NWTS”) on
24 behalf of defendant Cenlar on August 27, 2012. Dkt. # 34-1 at 4. The notice identified Freddie
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1 Mac as the owner of the loan and Cenlar as the loan servicer.¹ Plaintiff alleges that, pursuant to
2 Freddie Mac's document retention procedures, a third-party had physical possession of the
3 original signed promissory note at all relevant times, such that neither Cenlar nor NWTS had
4 the power to initiate or pursue a nonjudicial foreclosure under the DTA. In addition, plaintiff
5 alleges that NWTS imposed "Trustee's fees" in the Notice of Default, despite the fact that
6 NWTS had not yet been appointed as successor trustee, and that the fees were not authorized,
7 were unfair and deceptive, and were not in good faith.

8 Plaintiff sent requests for information to both Cenlar and defendant Bayview Loan
9 Servicing, LLC. There was no response from Bayview and plaintiff was unsatisfied with
10 Cenlar's response. Plaintiff hired an attorney to represent her and participated in mediation
11 with Cenlar under Washington's Foreclosure Mediation Program. RCW 61.24.163. On
12 October 3, 2012, Cenlar signed a document by which MERS purported to appoint NWTS as
13 successor trustee. Dkt. # 34-1 at 50. Defendant Morris affixed her notary seal to the
14 appointment without certifying that she was familiar with the person who signed the document
15 or had ascertained his right to make the appointment on MERS' behalf. Two days later,
16 defendant Dobron signed a Beneficiary Declaration in her role as an Assistant Secretary of
17 Cenlar, attesting that Cenlar was in possession of the original promissory note. Dkt. # 34-1 at
18 12.² A similar document was created on October 16, 2012. Dkt. # 34-1 at 14.

19 On November 21, 2012, defendant Dobron signed an "Assignment of Deed of
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21 ¹ In a subsequent section of the Notice of Default related to defendants' obligations under the
22 Fair Debt Collection Practices Act, NWTS identifies Cenlar as the "creditor to whom the debt is owed."
23 Dkt. # 34-1 at 6.

24 ² Plaintiff alleges that the various documents that were purportedly signed by defendant Dobron,
25 including the Beneficiary Declaration, bear signatures that "vary so drastically as to call into doubt
26 whether they were in fact signed by the same individual identified as Jennifer Dobron" and accuses her
of knowingly participating in a fraud related to false filings in the property records of this state. SAC at
¶¶ 23-24.

1 Trust,” this time as an Assistant Secretary of MERS. The assignment conveys MERS’ interest
2 in the deed of trust to Cenlar. Dkt. # 34-1 at 52. Defendant Morris notarized the document.³
3 Both the assignment and the appointment of successor trustee were recorded in early December
4 2012. Plaintiff alleges that NWTS regularly prepares and records documents in MERS’ name,
5 improperly using the servicer’s employees for such purposes. SAC at ¶ 30.

6 Plaintiff was able to negotiate a permanent loan modification in January 2013,
7 effectively bringing the loan current and clearing the default. She filed this lawsuit in April of
8 that year, alleging multiple misrepresentations and improprieties in the way defendants initiate
9 and pursue nonjudicial foreclosures in general, and hers in particular. In December 2013,
10 Cenlar levied a charge of \$1,261.42 in attorney’s fees and costs against plaintiff’s mortgage
11 account. SAC at ¶ 37. Plaintiff contested the charge by letter dated December 29, 2013. Dkt.
12 # 60-1 at 32-35. Over the next few months, Cenlar acknowledged receipt of her inquiry and
13 clarified the nature of her request, but failed to provide an explanation or authorization for the
14 disputed fees. Dkt. # 60-1 at 37-43. Between January 16, 2014, and March 6, 2014, plaintiff’s
15 monthly mortgage payments varied greatly and included thousands of dollars of attorney’s
16 fees. See, e.g., Dkt. # 60-1 at 52. Plaintiff sent another notice of error and request for
17 information. Cenlar did not respond. Based on the statements made in its motion, it appears
18 that Cenlar is charging plaintiff for the attorney’s fees and costs it is incurring in this matter.

19 DISCUSSION

20 A. Deed of Trust Act (“DTA”), RCW 61.24 *et seq.*

21 Plaintiff alleges that Cenlar, with the help of defendants NWTS, MERS, Dobron,
22 and Morris, initiated nonjudicial foreclosure proceedings, including the appointment of NWTS
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25 ³ Plaintiff suggests that it would have been physically impossible for defendant Morris, in New
26 Jersey, to notarize all of the documents attributed to her and that her “signatures on both documents do
not resemble each other in any way.” SAC at ¶ 29.

1 as successor trustee and the issuance of the Beneficiary Declarations, when it did not have
2 actual possession of the note and therefore lacked statutory authority. Defendants argue that,
3 even if true, plaintiff cannot state a claim under the DTA because a foreclosure sale never took
4 place. Dkt. # 82 at 5-6.⁴ The Washington Supreme Court recently determined that “the DTA
5 does not create an independent cause of action for monetary damages based on alleged
6 violations of its provisions where no foreclosure sale has been completed.” Frias v. Asset
7 Foreclosure Servs., Inc., __ Wn.2d __, 2014 WL 4648173, at * 1 (Sept. 18, 2014). Because a
8 foreclosure sale never occurred in this case, plaintiff has not stated a plausible claim for relief
9 under the DTA.⁵

10 **B. Real Estate Settlement Procedures Act (“RESPA”), 12 U.S.C. § 2601 *et seq.***

11 Plaintiff alleges that Cenlar violated § 2605(e)(2) of RESPA when it failed to
12 timely and fully respond to a written request for information regarding the identity of both the
13 owner and actual holder of the original promissory note. Dkt. # 60-1 at 76.⁶ Plaintiff alleges
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15 ⁴ The Court has not considered arguments made on NWTS’ behalf: NWTS is not a moving
16 party and has not authorized attorney Parker to represent it. Nor has the Court considered arguments
17 raised for the first time in reply regarding estoppel, agency, recording, and MERS’ authority to act.

18 ⁵ Despite the fact that defendants’ argument was ultimately accepted by the Supreme Court, the
19 Court finds defendants’ presentation of the DTA argument disturbing. At the time this issue was
20 briefed, the state appellate courts had found that the legislature intended to provide a cause of action for
21 damages for DTA violations and that nothing in the statute required that the violation result in the
22 wrongful sale of the property. Walker v. Quality Loan Serv. Corp., 176 Wn. App. 294, 308-12 (2013)
23 (expressly rejecting the analysis and conclusions of Vawter v. Quality Loan Serv. Corp. of Wash., 707
24 F. Supp.2d 1115, 1123 (W.D. Wash. 2010)). See also Bavand v. Onewest Bank, F.S.B., 176 Wn. App.
25 475, 496 (2013). In their motion, defendants did not even acknowledge this line of cases. In reply,
26 defendants cite to the undersigned’s March 2013 decision in McDonald v. OneWest Bank, FSB, 929 F.
Supp.2d 1079 (W.D. Wash. 2013), as support for their argument without mentioning the fact that the
Court had agreed to reconsider its analysis in light of Walker. Candor toward the tribunal, including
acknowledging and addressing contrary authority on the merits, is required and expected.

⁶ Plaintiff does not take issue with Cenlar’s failure to provide an explanation for the attorney’s
fees that were being added to her monthly mortgage statement.

1 that Cenlar's failure to respond, coupled with its continuing efforts to collect a challenged
2 indebtedness, caused her emotional distress and other damages. Plaintiff also alleges that
3 Cenlar engaged in a pattern of failing to respond to qualified written requests for information.
4 The record does not support this claim. Cenlar acknowledged plaintiff's request on January 7,
5 2014, requested additional time in which to respond on February 10, 2014, and identified
6 Freddie Mac as the owner and Cenlar as the servicing agent and beneficiary on February 24,
7 2014. Dkt. # 60-1 at 37, 39-40, and 42-43. There is no indication that plaintiff sent more than
8 one request for this information to Cenlar, making her allegations of a pattern wholly
9 conclusory. Plaintiff has not raised a plausible inference that Cenlar could be liable for
10 damages (actual or statutory) under RESPA for the alleged failure to timely and fully provide
11 information regarding the identity of the owner and actual holder of the note.

12 **C. Fair Debt Collection Practices Act ("FDCPA"), 15 U.S.C. § 1692 *et seq.***

13 Plaintiff alleges that (1) Cenlar continues to report to the credit reporting agencies
14 that her mortgage is in default and subject to foreclosure despite the fact that she is current on
15 her loan payments, (2) Cenlar repeatedly contacted or attempted to contact plaintiff directly
16 despite knowing that she is represented by counsel, and (3) Cenlar, Dobron, and Morris
17 manufactured and recorded documents misrepresenting Cenlar as the holder of the debt
18 instrument. SAC at ¶¶ 70-73.⁷ Defendants address the first two allegations in a footnote. Dkt.
19 # 82 at 7 n.5. Defendants are willing to concede that Cenlar is a debt collector for purposes of
20 the FDCPA,⁸ but argue that it must comply only with the requirements of § 1692f(6), not the
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22 ⁷ Plaintiff also alleges that defendant NWTs violated 15 U.S.C. § 1692f(6) by initiating a
23 "nonjudicial action to effect dispossession or disablement of property" because it did not have a "present
24 right to possession" of the property. NWTs is not a moving defendant, and the viability of this claim
has not been assessed.

25 ⁸ The Court notes that the statute specifically excludes from the definition of debt collector "any
26 person collecting or attempting to collect any debt owned or due or asserted to be owed or due another

1 rest of the statute. Given the facts alleged in the complaint, this argument fails.

2 Under the FDCPA, a “debt” is defined as “any obligation or alleged obligation of a
3 consumer to pay money arising out of a transaction in which the money, property, insurance, or
4 services which are the subject of the transaction are primarily for personal, family or household
5 purposes, whether or not such obligation has been reduced to judgment.” 15 U.S.C. §1692a(5).

6 The debt, then, is an obligation “to pay money.” A “debt collector” is defined as:

7 any person who uses any instrumentality of interstate commerce or the mails in any
8 business the principal purpose of which is the collection of any debts, or who
9 regularly collects or attempts to collect, directly or indirectly, debts owed or due or
10 asserted to be owed or due another. . . . For the purpose of section 808(6) [15
11 U.S.C. § 1692f(6)], such term also includes any person who uses any
instrumentality of interstate commerce or the mails in any business the principal
purpose of which is the enforcement of security interests.

12 15 U.S.C. § 1692a(6). Plaintiff’s first two FDCPA claims against Cenlar apparently arise out
13 of Cenlar’s attempts to compel monetary payments following modification of the loan. They
14 therefore fall within the first part of the definition of “debt collector.”⁹ Having conceded that it

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16 to the extent such activity . . . concerns a debt which was not in default at the time it was obtained by
17 such person.” 15 U.S.C. § 1692a(6)(F). It is not clear when Cenlar took over the servicing rights of
plaintiff’s loan.

18 ⁹ To the extent plaintiff’s FDCPA claim arises out of actions defendants took to effectuate the
19 nonjudicial foreclosure, it is likely that only § 1692f(6) applies. See, e.g., Doughty v. Holder, 2014 WL
20 220832, at * 3 (E.D. Wash. Jan. 21, 2014); Thepvongsa v. Regional Trustee Servs. Corp., 972
21 F. Supp.2d 1221, 1229-30 (W.D. Wash. 2013); Jara v. Aurora Loan Servs., LLC, 2011 WL 6217308, at
22 * 5 (N.D. Cal. Dec. 14, 2011); Lettenmaier v. Fed. Home Loan Mortg. Corp., 2011 WL 1938166, at
23 *11-12 (D. Or. May 20, 2011); Armacost v. HSBC Bank USA, 2011 WL 825151, at * 5-6 (D. Idaho
24 Feb. 9, 2011); Long v. Nat’l Default Servicing Corp., 2010 WL 3199933 at *4 (D. Nev. Aug. 11, 2010).
25 See also Statements of General Policy or Interpretation Staff Commentary on the Fair Debt Collection
26 Practices Act, 53 Fed. Reg. 50097, 50108 (Dec. 13, 1988) (relying on the two-part definition of “debt
collector” to find that, if a party falls only within the security interest provisions of the definition, then
they “are subject only to this provision [§ 1692f(6)] and not the rest of the FDCPA.”). Under plaintiff’s
theory of the case, NWTs had no present right to possession of the property through non-judicial
foreclosure because neither it nor Cenlar was the holder of the underlying debt instrument. Whether the
acts of which Cenlar, Dobron, and Morris are accused constitute nonjudicial actions designed to

1 is a debt collector, Cenlar offers no reason to conclude that the credit reporting and
2 communication provisions of the FDCPA are inapplicable.

3 As for plaintiff's third allegation against Cenlar, Dobron, and Morris, the Court
4 has already determined that the falsification of documents to make it appear that Cenlar was the
5 holder of the promissory note is not a violation of § 1692e(2)(A) of the FDCPA. Dkt. # 81 at
6 4. That section prohibits the false representation of "the character, amount, or legal status of
7 any debt" in connection with collection activities. Assuming that the moving defendants were
8 "debt collectors" for purposes of the FDCPA, representations regarding MERS' role, the
9 location of the original note, the validity of certain assignments and appointments, or the
10 veracity of the Beneficiary Declarations do not reflect on the character, amount, or legal status
11 of the debt. This portion of plaintiff's FDCPA claim fails as a matter of law.

12 **D. Washington Consumer Protection Act ("CPA"), RCW 19.86 *et seq.***

13 The CPA prohibits "[u]nfair methods of competition and unfair or deceptive acts
14 or practices in the conduct of any trade or commerce." RCW 19.86.020. A private cause of
15 action exists under the CPA if (1) the conduct is unfair or deceptive, (2) occurs in trade or
16 commerce, (3) affects the public interest, and (4) causes injury (5) to plaintiff's business or
17 property. Hangman Ridge Training Stables, Inc. v. Safeco Title Ins. Co., 105 Wn.2d 778, 780
18 (1986). Plaintiff alleges that the moving defendants violated the CPA when they (1) falsely
19 represented that MERS was the beneficiary of the Deed of Trust with the power to transfer a
20 beneficial interest to Cenlar and (2) falsely represented that Cenlar had actual possession of the
21 note and/or was the beneficiary of the Deed of Trust. The first claim fails as a matter of law
22 because plaintiff has failed to plausibly allege that the representations regarding MERS' role
23 caused her harm. She has not alleged that she relied in any way on the original representations
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25 dispossess plaintiff of her property in violation of § 1692f(6)(A) is doubtful, but the issue is not properly
26 before the Court.

1 in the Deed of Trust, either at the time they were made or during the nonjudicial foreclosure
2 process. In addition, MERS' actions are essentially irrelevant to the DTA analysis or the
3 propriety of the attempted foreclosure. Under the DTA, a "beneficiary" is defined as "the
4 holder of the instrument or document evidencing the obligations secured by the deed of trust."
5 RCW 61.24.005(2). Cenlar's authority to act as the beneficiary thus hinged on its actual
6 physical possession of the original signed promissory note. Bain v. Metro. Mortg. Group, Inc.,
7 175 Wn.2d 83, 89 (2012) (finding that "only the actual holder of the promissory note or other
8 instrument evidencing the obligation may be a beneficiary with the power to appoint a trustee
9 to proceed with a nonjudicial foreclosure on real property"). Cenlar's status as the beneficiary
10 for purposes of the DTA comes not from MERS' purported assignment – defective or not – but
11 rather from its physical possession of plaintiff's original note. Any injuries caused by Cenlar's
12 claim to be the beneficiary and holder of the promissory note did not arise from MERS'
13 identification as the beneficiary.

14 Plaintiff has, however, alleged facts from which one could plausibly infer that the
15 moving defendants engaged in unfair and deceptive practices to the extent they created
16 documents and made representations that gave the false impression that Cenlar had actual
17 possession of the promissory note and was therefore authorized to initiate a nonjudicial
18 foreclosure. Plaintiff alleges that defendants have engaged in similar conduct in other
19 foreclosures under the DTA and that the wrongful initiation of foreclosure proceedings
20 resulted in actual damages, including injury to her credit, loss of opportunities, emotional
21 upheaval, and prolonged stress related to the potential loss of her home. While not all of these
22 damages are compensable under the CPA, it is also likely that plaintiff expended time and
23 resources attempting to unwind the misrepresentations and that such costs recoverable. The
24 four-year statute of limitations poses no obstacle to claims arising from the flurry of paperwork
25 and representations made to give Cenlar apparent authority to foreclose: those acts occurred
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1 less than one year before this action was filed.

2 **E. Fraud**

3 Plaintiff alleges that defendants Dobron and Morris engaged in fraud as part of the
4 larger scheme to initiate a nonjudicial foreclosure even though Cenlar did not have actual
5 possession of the promissory note. In particular, plaintiff alleges that Dobron falsely
6 represented that she was an Assistant Secretary of MERS when she purportedly assigned the
7 deed of trust from MERS to Cenlar (Dkt. # 60-1 at 27), that she knew the assignment would be
8 recorded and used to convince others that Cenlar had the authority to initiate a nonjudicial
9 foreclosure, and that it was so used, causing plaintiff injury. Defendant Morris is accused of
10 placing her notary seal on the Appointment of Successor Trustee and the Assignment of Deed
11 of Trust without certifying the identity and/or authorization of the signers, thereby making it
12 possible for Cenlar to assume the mantle of beneficiary and initiate the nonjudicial foreclosure,
13 causing plaintiff injury. Defendants seek dismissal of the fraud claims because plaintiff has
14 failed to state the “who, what, when, where, and how” of the alleged fraud. Dkt. # 82 at 9.
15 Defendants do not discuss plaintiff’s allegations or identify any particular deficiency. The
16 Court declines to do it for them.

17 **F. Real Estate Settlement Procedures Act (“RESPA”), Regulation X**

18 On March 25, 2014, plaintiff, through counsel, sent Cenlar a Notice of Error under
19 12 C.F.R. § 1024.35 and a Request for Information under 12 C.F.R. § 1024.36 of Regulation X
20 of RESPA. In particular, plaintiff notified Cenlar that it had misapplied payments made,
21 resulting in the imposition of additional charges (Dkt. # 60-1 at 59), and requesting a detailed
22 explanation of the attorney’s fees assessed, including the person or entity to whom they were
23 paid and the authorization for such charges (Dkt. # 60-1 at 68). Plaintiff alleges that Cenlar
24 failed to respond to the notice or the request, evidencing a pattern of noncompliance with
25 Regulation X and causing her damage. Cenlar argues that no response was necessary because
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1 the requested information was duplicative of information plaintiff requested in December 2013.

2 Cenlar's obligations under Regulation X cannot be so lightly cast aside. A notice
3 of error or request for information would be considered duplicative only if Cenlar had
4 previously complied with the disclosure and response requirements of 12 C.F.R. § 1024.35(d)
5 and (e) and 12 C.F.R. § 1024.36(c) and (d). The Court assumes, for purposes of this motion,
6 that responding to an earlier qualified written request could satisfy the "previously complied"
7 requirements. Nevertheless, the requests were not duplicative and there was no previous
8 compliance. The time periods involved in the two inquiries were distinct, and Cenlar did not
9 substantively respond to the attorney fee issue when it was raised in December 29, 2013. The
10 last communication from Cenlar simply requested another extension of time in which to
11 investigate the attorney's fees and costs levied in November 2013. No further response is in
12 evidence. The March 2014 inquiries involved subsequent charges levied and payments made.
13 Even if there had been a temporal overlap, Cenlar's failure to respond to the first request for
14 information cannot justify a refusal to respond to the second request on the grounds that it was
15 "duplicative."

16 **G. Truth in Lending Act ("TILA), Regulation Z**

17 In her eighth claim, plaintiff alleges that Cenlar misapplied her mortgage payments
18 by using them to pay down unexplained charges for attorney's fees and costs before applying
19 them to the interest and principal on the debt, in violation of "12 C.F.R. § 1464 (Crediting of
20 Payments/Payoff Statements) of Regulation Z." SAC at ¶ 96. Cenlar correctly points out that
21 there is no 12 C.F.R. § 1464, and the Court has been unable to locate a regulation with the
22 designated title or that fits plaintiff's general description. In her opposition, plaintiff simply
23 reiterates that her TILA claim arises under 12 C.F.R. § 1464. Dkt. # 96 at 9. This non-existent
24 claim will be dismissed with leave to amend.

25 **H. Breach of Contract and Breach of Implied Duty of Good Faith and Fair Dealing**

1 Plaintiff alleges that the loan modification agreement she entered into with Cenlar
2 does not authorize Cenlar to add monthly charges for attorney's fees and costs to her mortgage
3 payment amount and that the imposition of such fees, even if not expressly prohibited by the
4 contract, is a breach of the implied duty of good faith and fair dealing. Plaintiff's regular
5 monthly payment is \$1,525.37, and yet she has been billed thousands more than that for
6 charges described only as "FEE - ATTORNEY FEES." By February 2014, plaintiff found
7 herself over \$10,000 in arrears and yet was unable to get Cenlar to explain how these fees were
8 incurred, why they were her responsibility, or under what authority her mortgage payments
9 could vary so wildly. Plaintiff argues that these fees are unauthorized and that they frustrate
10 the purpose of the modification agreement.

11 Plaintiff has alleged facts giving rise to a plausible claim for relief on her contract
12 claims. Cenlar is apparently billing plaintiff for the attorney's fees it is incurring while
13 litigating this case. Cenlar argues that the original Deed of Trust authorizes the charges:
14 paragraph 26 of the document allows the Lender to recover reasonable attorney's fees in any
15 action in which the deed is construed or enforced. Dkt. # 32-1 at 136. The charges and the
16 justification therefore are dubious. Even if the Court were to assume that Cenlar is the
17 "Lender" for purposes of fee provision, fee recovery is authorized only "in" an action or
18 proceeding, not at the unrestrained whim of the servicer and without any check on the
19 reasonableness of the fees charged. Given that the loan modification agreement was intended
20 to restructure the debt so that plaintiff could continue to make the payments and retain her
21 home, the unpredictable and significant levies Cenlar has unilaterally imposed on her account
22 clearly thwart the benefits plaintiff hoped to receive from the agreement.
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1 **I. Outrage**

2 The elements of the tort of outrage are (“1) extreme and outrageous conduct,
3 (2) intentional or reckless infliction of emotional distress, and (3) severe emotional distress on
4 the part of plaintiff.” Rice v. Janovich, 109 Wn.2d 48, 61 (1987). If plaintiff’s allegations are
5 true, she has stated a viable claim of outrage. Plaintiff’s allegations plausibly establish that
6 what started out as a fairly standard mortgage case has morphed into a vendetta in which the
7 mortgage servicing company, piqued that the borrower had the temerity to sue defendants and
8 challenge the way they do business, has latched onto a strained and dubious interpretation of
9 the deed of trust in order to punish her. Plaintiff, having just gone through the mortgage
10 modification process, is in no position to deal with monthly payments that bounce all over the
11 place, sometimes tripling her regular mortgage payment. Cenlar is intimately familiar with
12 plaintiff’s finances and is undoubtedly aware that such charges are beyond her ability to pay.
13 With no ability to control the charges and, until now, no explanation for why it was happening,
14 plaintiff fell delinquent within a matter of months, raising the specter of another foreclosure
15 and, not surprisingly, causing severe emotional distress. Cenlar’s message is crystal clear:
16 continue with this litigation and risk losing your home. A jury would be entirely justified in
17 believing that such conduct, if proven, is beyond all bounds of decency and utterly intolerable
18 in our community.

19 **J. Rule 11 Sanctions**

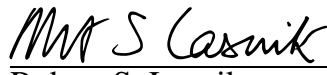
20 Plaintiff has not satisfied the safe harbor provisions of Rule 11 or otherwise
21 complied with the Rule’s procedural requirements.

22 **CONCLUSION**

23 For all of the foregoing reasons, the motion to dismiss filed by Cenlar, MERS,
24 Dobron, and Morris is GRANTED in part and DENIED in part. Plaintiff’s DTA claim against
25 the moving defendants, RESPA § 2605(e)(2) claim against Cenlar, part of her FDCPA claim,
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1 part of the CPA claim, and the TILA claim are hereby DISMISSED. Plaintiff is granted leave
2 to amend the RESPA and TILA claims. Plaintiff may proceed with discovery regarding all of
3 her other claims against the moving defendants. Plaintiff's request for Rule 11 sanctions is
4 DENIED.

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6 Dated this 3rd day of October, 2014.

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8 Robert S. Lasnik
United States District Judge
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